

# ***IOWA OUTDOORS***

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

**www.iowadnr.com**

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**June 10, 2003**

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## **NEW STATE RECORD BLUE CATFISH CAUGHT FROM THE MISSOURI RIVER**

DES MOINES – Rick West, Jr., of Honey Creek, Iowa, has caught a lot of big fish from the Missouri River over the years. A 50-pound catfish – either flathead or blue – is nothing to get excited about. But when West and his brother Kyle set their bank lines late on May 16, the excitement was only a sunrise away.

The West brothers were fishing near Council Bluffs. Rick West said during a typical fishing trip, they would set their bank lines before dark, do some still fishing with a rod and reel, then come back in the morning to see if anything was biting. A few years back, he caught a 59-pound blue cat. Another time, he hooked a flathead that may have gone 80 pounds, but didn't get it landed.

When they returned the following morning, they found a big fish had taken the bait. Although Rick said he doesn't recall if the 77 pound, 15 ounce blue catfish took a live sunfish or the cut bait, he does know that it is a new state record. It seems the West family and big blue catfish go hand in hand. West's father, Rick West, Sr., had the state record – a 53-pound fish – for a couple of weeks a few years ago.

But it wasn't until the next day before West could locate a certified scale and a DNR witness, conservation officer Marlowe Wilson, that the record was confirmed. During that time, he kept it tied up in the river and took a few pictures.

West caught four blue cats that day, and said all were pretty good sized. He releases all the blue catfish he catches, including this state record fish. "It seems they're not as abundant as the flatheads," he said.

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## **CLEAR LAKE STATE PARK CAMPGROUND SET TO OPEN FRIDAY**

DES MOINES – After two months of construction work, Clear Lake State Park campground will officially reopen at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, June 13. The campground renovation project is part of the ongoing effort to address health and safety issues for state park visitors.

"The campground electrical systems in the park date back to 1965 and 1979," said Mike Schoneboom, state park district supervisor. "Some of the sites were using the old 30-amp fuses and the campground did not have any 50-amp sites which is a much needed service for the newer, larger camping units being used today."

The renovation project included adding more electric campsites, upgrading all electric sites to 50-amp service and increasing the size of campsites.

"Even though we lost some campsites with the renovation, campers will be pleased with the larger campsites and up-to-date electric service," Schoneboom said. "The campground now has 174 sites and 163 of those sites have electricity."

Clear Lake State Park has one of the busiest campgrounds in the state park system next to the Gull Point Complex and Rock Creek State Park. In 2002, the park hosted 27,294 camping guest days.

The renovation project was funded through the Restore the Outdoors funding program, which continues to be an important program to renovate and restore many of the state park facilities.

**For more information, contact Schoneboom, at 712/657-2638.**

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**After Missing a Year,**

## **FUNDING RESTORED TO REAP**

DES MOINES – Iowa’s signature investment program in natural and cultural resources, the Resource Enhancement and Protection program, has been funded at \$11 million for the coming fiscal year. In place since 1989, the nationally acclaimed REAP program was virtually unfunded last year due to tight budgets.

“Iowans have good cause to celebrate the renewed availability of REAP funds,” said DNR Director Jeff Vonk. “This funding program supports their city, county and state parks and open spaces. REAP also provides funding to landowners for soil and water conservation as well as county and state roadside prairie developments. Historical renovation and conservation education are also part of REAP.”

Vonk said REAP is funded through the state’s infrastructure fund that comes from gaming revenues. Last year, he said the \$2 million authorized for REAP went only to paying off some existing obligations, property taxes and state parks. However, there was enough money generated by the sale of natural resource license plates to fund the REAP Conservation Education Program at \$350,000 last year. **(See related news release on “Grants Boost Conservation Education in Iowa.”)**

The legislature approved Gov. Vilsack’s request for REAP funding during its regular session, and the Governor recently signed the appropriation.

REAP coordinator for the DNR, Ross Harrison, advised those interested in applying for REAP funds to go to the DNR website, [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com), for additional information on all the programs that REAP funds and qualifications for funding. Harrison said Aug. 15 continues to be the deadline for applicants from city and county park and open space projects.

**For more information, contact Ross Harrison at 515-281-5973 or [ross.harrison@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:ross.harrison@dnr.state.ia.us)**

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## **THE FRENZY CONTINUES AS CLEAR LAKE ANGLERS ENJOY YELLOW BASS BONANZA**

By Lowell Washburn  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

CLEAR LAKE---Clear Lake is the undisputed yellow bass capitol of Iowa.

When conditions are favorable, this explosive scrapper becomes the lake's most sought after and most frequently harvested fish species. Renowned for their superb flavor, yellow bass taste as good as they fight. Many enthusiasts go so far as to claim

that they meet or exceed the table quality of all other freshwater species -- including the famed walleye.

But even at Clear Lake, the yellow bass fishery is as unpredictable as it is dynamic. Here, as elsewhere, this prolific panfish operates on extreme boom or bust cycles. When they're hot, they're red hot. And when they're not, they're not.

Clear Lake is currently enjoying one of those incredible booms. For over a month now, the fishing has been hot -- red hot. Bass fishing has been so good, in fact, that DNR fisheries biologists are predicting a potential record harvest for the 2003 season. It's not over yet, and anglers marvel as huge concentrations of adult bass continue to prowl the shorelines.

It's no secret that local residents take special pride in this unique North Iowa fishery, and they've made no attempt to keep the current yellow bass bonanza under wraps. It doesn't seem to matter which local cafe, gas station, or bait shop you happen to drop in on these days, the topic of yellow bass fishing is sure to come up and will likely dominate the conversation.

Here are some recent examples of what's been happening. Last Saturday morning, 72-year-old Edna Brown found herself smack in the middle of yellow bass feeding frenzy. After two hours of fishing, she left a south shore public dock dragging a hefty stringer containing 95 keepers. A nearby wader fisherman left the water a half hour later, taking over 150 fish with him.

At the McIntosh Woods State Park boat ramp, a pair of grinning anglers claimed to have just over 200 yellows corralled into four five gallon plastic buckets. That same afternoon, the park's public fish cleaning station shut down after the disposal grinders and sewer line couldn't keep up. DNR conservation officers finally used police ribbon to seal the area and prevent a near constant procession of fishermen from further clogging the system.

"I guess it would be an understatement to say that yellow bass fishing has been creating a lot of excitement around Clear Lake this spring," said DNR fisheries biologist, Jim Wahl.

"It's already been quite a season. Our creel survey tallied an angler harvest of around twenty thousand yellow bass during late April, and the numbers have just skyrocketed from there. Catch rates have remained excellent during May and early June, and I think that this year will easily rank as one of our best harvests ever. One of our biggest seasons came in 1995 when anglers took over 160,000 yellow bass from Clear Lake. I don't know if we'll beat that harvest, but I'm sure that we'll at least come very close."

In spite of continued heavy [angler] pressure, Clear Lake's yellow bass remain relatively easy to find. Look for spawning fish in shallow water containing and abundance of rock. Top locations include Dodge's Point, Methodist Camp shoreline, and

the Island. Good numbers of fish are also being found along shallow stretches of gravel or clean sand.

For best success, anglers need to think small, think slow, and think shallow. Although yellow bass are highly aggressive feeders, they can also be finicky. Hair or tinsel jigs and crappie-type plastic lures in the 1/64 oz. class produce the best results. Many anglers prefer ultra light tackle combined with slow or erratic retrieves. Although schools will move to deeper water later this month, most adults are continuing to frequent water depths ranging from 16 to 30 inches.

If the early morning bite is a bit on the slow side, don't despair. The action typically heats up as water temperatures rise. When temps reach the high 50s, be prepared for nonstop action.

Yellow bass love company and individual schools may contain hundreds of fish. Competition is keen, making the bass highly mobile. To stay in the game, anglers should be prepared to move with the fish.

Exactly how long this year's bass frenzy will continue is anyone's guess. But Wahl predicts that anglers are currently enjoying the home stretch of this season's best action.

"During a normal year, the [Clear Lake] yellow bass spawn will peak around Memorial Day week-end when water temperatures hit the low to mid-60s," said Wahl. "After that, things can tail off fast as fish vacate the shallows."

But this year, things have been a little different, says Wahl. Cooler water temps have stretched the window a bit, and anglers are getting bonus days from this year's run.

"During the past few weeks, we've enjoyed several peaks where there have been very large numbers of fish concentrated into extremely shallow habitats. It's been a very positive combination that has made the resource readily available to a wide range of anglers," said Wahl.

"Fish have essentially been accessible to anyone who wants to go after them. People fishing from boats, wading the shorelines, or just sitting on a dock all have an equal chance. It's really a unique situation where everyone has an opportunity to enjoy the resource," he added.

"Right now, a lot of people asking how long this kind of fishing is going to last. All I can say is that it won't last forever, especially at this intensity. I'm just telling everybody to get out there right now while the fish are still going strong."

When it comes to yellow bass, biologists urge anglers to forget catch and release, and concentrate on "catch to eat".

"This is definitely one fish species that people do not have to feel bad about taking home. The facts are that we want anglers to harvest as many adult yellows as they possibly can," said Wahl.

"Yellow bass are prolific and short lived. One way or the other, the older year classes are going to disappear, and they might as well be utilized. There's no such thing as taking too many."

**For more information, contact Lowell Washburn at 641-425-1023.**

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## **GRANTS BOOST CONSERVATION EDUCATION**

More than \$250,000 in grants has been issued to 14 conservation education projects by the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Conservation Education Board.

The REAP education board had received requests for more than \$500,000 in funding for 24 different projects, but is allocated only \$350,000 per year for such grants from the state's infrastructure account. Of the remaining \$100,000 in education funds, up to \$75,000 is being contracted for a statewide outcome-based assessment of conservation programs, and any funds left will be made available for future grant requests.

Although the full \$10 to \$12 million REAP program was not funded in the past year, existing revenue from the sale of the special natural resources license plates allowed for funding of the conservation education part of REAP.

Governor Tom Vilsack recently signed an \$11 million appropriation for full funding of the REAP formula in the coming year that will see funding restored to city, county and state park and habitat development and land purchase; prairie roadside management; historical renovation; and soil conservation activities. Funds are allocated to these programs by a formula set by law.

Conservation education grants typically are used for start-up of innovative projects that will eventually become self-sustaining and widely adopted for use by others. Matching funds are not required, although preferred. The 14 grants recently approved included an additional \$100,000 in matching expenses from grantees. Grant requests were due May 15, and additional details of the process are available at the website: [iowaee.org](http://iowaee.org). Grants approved (rounded figures) included:

- \$16,000 to Indian Creek Nature Center, Cedar Rapids, to extend conservation education to home-schooled students.

- \$37,000 to ISU Extension, for educator training in the Food, Land and People curriculum materials.
- \$22,000 to ISU to conduct traveling wildlife workshops those previously trained in Nature Mapping.
- \$8,000 to the E Resources Group, West Des Moines, to introduce toddlers to environmental education.
- \$15,000 to the Iowa Conservation Education Council for its Winter Solstice Workshop for conservation educators.
- \$19,000 to the Iowa Conservation Education Council for brining conservation education into schools through service learning (community volunteer) projects.
- \$16,000 to the UNI film project on prairies: America's Lost Landscape.
- \$6,000 to UNI to introduce small business pollution prevention resources to high school business teachers.
- \$16,000 to UNI to incorporate waste reduction lessons into middle school curricula.
- \$15,000 to the Polk County Conservation Board to develop educational packs for park visitors to self-interpretation of natural areas.
- \$21,000 to the Polk County Conservation Board to collaborate with and market the use of central Iowa conservation education centers for schools.
- \$28,000 to the Iowa Academy of Science for educator training in water quality instruction through Project WET.
- \$20,000 to the Iowa Soybean Association to improve environmental performance of crop producers.
- \$15,000 to the Iowa Wildlife Rehabilitator Association for professional training in wildlife diseases and rehabilitation.

**For more information, contact Ross Harrison at 515-281-5973, or [ross.harrison@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:ross.harrison@dnr.state.ia.us)**

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## FLOAT TRIP WITH A PURPOSE

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

As another canoe slid over the shallow, rocky riffle, it glided into deeper water. For a second. With a metallic ‘thump’, it hit another rock and hung up. The current turned it broadside. It wavered for a moment before spilling its human cargo waist deep into the Maquoketa River above Manchester. Barb Cooley, of Dubuque, was stoic, but unharmed by the cold water dip as she and her partner pulled the canoe over to the shore checkpoint. Just another watery casualty from Project AWARE.

About 50 participants started the event and are joined by a few day-trippers as their flotilla moved through Jones and Jackson counties toward the confluence with the Mississippi River. Most were experienced canoeists and expected to get wet. And there was plenty of it, as they skirted snags, sweepers and ‘cross stream’ fences on the Maquoketa. Mixing recreation and scenery with environmental awareness, organizers foresee making it an annual event.

“The event went great,” pronounced Brian Soenen, IOWATER Coordinator with the Department of Natural Resources, who developed the idea over the last few months. “The physical dictates might have been a little much, but everyone reacted well. With these things, you plan the best you can and adjust accordingly.” Working with the DNR’s *Keepers of the Land* volunteer program, county conservation boards, various sponsors and support people, paddlers bucked low water and light rain showers.

The Maquoketa water level had dropped four inches since a scouting trip a week prior. That meant frequent interruptions, to portage canoes and cargo on the shallower upper stretch. Adding to the mix was the weight of abandoned tires, lawn chairs, metal scraps, even a rusty hog waterer, found along the way. Newly strung fences, including a couple electric ones, also became hurdles. By late afternoon of the first day though, the river deepened and widened.

“The idea of the cleanup came to me while listening to Chad Pegracke at a volunteer water monitoring conference,” explained Soenen. “If everybody would do their part, we would really see an improvement in the streams.” Pegracke is a nationally acclaimed river cleanup legend, who has pulled many tons of debris from the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. More importantly, he has spurred hundreds of volunteers to follow his lead.

Besides the floating trash detail, participants collected water quality samples along the way. “Things like clarity, dissolved oxygen levels, nitrates, flow rates, the ‘canopy’ above, even the substrate (river bottom) and bugs that are found in sample areas,” detailed DNR geologist Lynette Siegley of Iowa City. “They help point to the water quality.” Some canoeists were water quality volunteers back in their hometowns, testing and advising state water officials, about streams in their communities.



Participants sat through various evening programs offered each evening, including a water quality presentation. Geologist Mary Skopec offered an outline of stream and lake quality, especially tied to levels of nutrients coming off the watershed into streams and lakes. “Think of these things while you are going downstream,” challenged Skopec, also of Iowa City and the DNR’s geological survey bureau. “Look at pipes ending in the stream. Observe the tributaries as they empty into the river; some will run clear. Some flow in muddy.”

More than ‘just’ a floating classroom, though, the surroundings make the trip worth the toil. Pat Schlarbaum pointed just off the stream bank where a Common Yellowthroat serenaded passing canoeists. While not rare, the small warbler was a bonus among all the deep green foliage on the trip. Schlarbaum kept his eyes peeled for signs of river otters. Paddlers are also assessing the merits of their crafts; from a 40-plus year old fiberglass Crestliner to kayak-type one-person deck canoes.

If it seemed like vacation to the participants...it was. They just learned and improved the river, as they went.

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## ***IOWA FISHING REPORT***

**For the week of June 10, 2003**

**[www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com)**

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

### **Northeast**

**Mississippi River: Pool 10** was at 610.5 feet Monday morning and the temperature was 67 degrees. **Pool 9:** Northern pike and walleye fishing is picking up at DeSoto Bay and Minnesota Slough trolling crankbaits or drifting with leeches or night crawlers. **Pool 9-10:** Bluegill fishing is excellent. Try fishing the shallow weed beds in Norwegian or Bussey Lake (Pool 10). In **Pool 11**, the area below the Dam 10 spillway has been producing freshwater drum, white bass and rock bass. Channel catfish are biting on worms fished in the Cassville Slough area. Water levels in **Pools 12-15** continue to drop and fishing success is improving. **Pools 12-15:** Freshwater drum are being taken on night crawlers fished in the tailwaters, side channels and main channel borders. Fishing for channel catfish is good to excellent using night crawlers and prepared baits. Walleye fishing is good in **Pools 12-14**. Bluegills are hitting worms floated under a bobber along submerged woody structure in **Pools 12-14** backwater areas. Largemouth bass fishing is good in backwater areas in **Pools 12-14**.

**Volga River (Fayette):** The river level is low and smallmouth bass fishing is good on small Rapalas.

**Cedar River** (Bremer and Black Hawk), **Wapsipinicon** (Buchanan) and **Maquoketa Rivers** (Delaware): The river water levels are all rising due to recent rains and channel catfishing is good to excellent. Favorite baits include night crawlers, chicken liver, and leeches. The leeches are more successful in clear water, while chicken liver works well in more turbid conditions. Walleye fishing is fair on jig and night crawler combinations. Anglers are catching a lot of 13 to 14-inch walleyes.

**Lake Delhi** (Delaware): Bluegill fishing is good on small jigs tipped with a piece of night crawler.

**Lake Meyer** (Winneshek): Fishing is good to excellent for bluegill, crappies, northern pike and largemouth bass.

**Lake Hendricks** (Howard): Anglers are catching 8 to 10-inch bluegills on chartreuse-colored ice-fishing jigs tipped with wax worms fished under a bobber next to weed lines. Largemouth bass are good on top-water lures and plastic frogs fished in the early morning or late evening hours. Crappie fishing is slow, but some are being caught on wax worms.

**Volga Lake** (Fayette): Bluegill and crappie fishing is good to excellent on small jigs tipped with a piece of night crawler suspended under a bobber.

**Trout** fishing and stream conditions are excellent. For current trout stocking information, contact the Big Spring Hatchery at 563-245-1699, Decorah Hatchery at 563-382-3315 or Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-5736. You can also view the trout stocking calendar on-line by going to [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com), clicking on **Fish and Fishing** and then choosing **Favorite Pages**.

**For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.**

### **Northwest**

**Spirit Lake** (Dickinson): Bullheads are being caught at the Hales Slough access. Bullhead fishing at the Grade has slowed. Largemouth bass fishing has been good. Walleye fishing is good all over the lake using many techniques. Sorting is required to catch legal fish. A reminder to anglers – remember to practice proper and safe handling techniques to ensure survival when releasing fish. Northern pike fishing is excellent. Fish the shallow weed lines for the best action. An occasional muskie is being caught by walleye and pike anglers.

**Little Spirit Lake** (Dickinson): Anglers are catching walleyes by either casting artificial lures to the rock shorelines or by pulling spinners with power baits.

**West Okoboji** (Dickinson): Anglers are catching bluegills around docks and in the canals. The best bait is a small hair jig, preferably black. Some nice sized bullheads are being caught in the Emerson Bay canals on a worm and a bobber. Anglers are catching some largemouth bass in the canals, and are just starting to catch them along the weed lines. Smallmouth bass are on their spawning beds at any of the rocky points. Walleyes are starting to hit along the weed lines. Use a leech and a bobber.

**East Okoboji** (Dickinson): Bullheads are biting at the north end. Some walleyes are being caught at the Hwy. 9 Bridge using a minnow or a light twister tail.

**Silver Lake** (Dickinson): The walleye bite is good. Artificial baits, either cast from shore or trolled behind a boat, will produce the best catch.

**Lost Island Lake** (Clay and Palo Alto): Anglers are still catching walleyes, however, patience and persistence is needed.

**Five Island Lake** (Palo Alto): Walleyes are hitting minnow imitating or shad rap type lures. Anglers fishing from shore will find the best walleye fishing in the evening.

**Elk Lake** (Clay): Anglers are catching walleyes.

**Clear Lake** (Cerro Gordo): The water temperature is in the middle 60s. Walleye fishing is fair. Anglers drifting or trolling live bait rigs are catching a few fish. Trolling crankbaits in 6 to 12 feet of water is providing some walleye action. Remember the 14-inch minimum length limit on walleye. Yellow bass are nearing the end of their spawn. Fishing has been good around the Island and along the east shore. Small jigs and pieces of night crawler have been working best. Channel catfish are fair around vegetation in the west end of the lake, using chicken liver or chubs. Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers along the windy shorelines.

**Briggs Woods** (Hamilton): Bluegills are biting on small pieces of night crawler and small jigs.

**Little Wall Lake** (Hamilton): Bluegill fishing is fair using small jigs and pieces of night crawler.

**Eldred Sherwood** (Hancock): Bluegills are hitting small pieces of night crawler and small jigs. Largemouth bass fishing is fair. Spinner baits and crankbaits are both catching fish.

**Beeds Lake** (Franklin): Crappie fishing is good using small tube jigs and minnows around the jetties and brush piles. Bluegills are hitting on small pieces of night crawler around the shoreline.

**Upper and Lower Pine lakes** (Hardin): Largemouth bass fishing has been good using spinner baits. Bluegills are good using pieces of night crawler. Crappie fishing is good around downed trees using small jigs and night crawlers.

**Black Hawk Lake** (Sac): Bullhead fishing is excellent all over the lake. Walleyes are fair using leeches under a bobber. Catfish are fair on a variety of baits.

**Storm Lake** (Buena Vista): Walleye fishing is fair for anglers trolling crankbaits. Catfish are being caught all over the lake. White bass are good on twisters and crankbaits.

**Brushy Creek** (Webster): Crappies are hitting on jigs and minnows. The fish are not plentiful, but good size. Anglers have caught many legal sized bass (15 inches or larger) on an assortment of lures and live bait. Walleyes are being caught in the evening or early morning hours. The best action has been on leeches. Lots of sunfish are being caught on worms, but most are small. A few muskies are being caught, but are under the 40-inch minimum length limit.

**For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.**

### **Southwest**

**Green Valley** (Union): Anglers are catching big crappies on structure, and in 5 to 8-feet of water. Bluegills are being caught using small baits on the spawning beds. Largemouth bass can be caught with crankbaits along shore.

**Fogle Lake** (Ringgold): Bluegills are being caught on the spawning beds near the back of the bay area, west side of the lake. Crappie fishing is good along the dam.

**Three Mile (Union):** Anglers are catching walleyes using leaches on points near shore and over the fish mounds. Channel catfish are being caught at north end and in shallow bays on night crawlers, and under or near fish cleaning station. Crappies are being caught in 5 to 8-feet of water over rock areas. Largemouth bass fishing is good. Bluegills are being caught using small baits on the spawning beds at north end of lake.

**Twelve Mile (Union):** Channel catfish fishing is good in warmer bay areas. Walleye fishing is good using leaches on the points. Crappies can be caught near the shore along the steep timbered shoreline on the west side of the lake. Anglers are catching a lot of yellow bass. Largemouth bass fishing is good.

**Wilson Lake (Taylor):** Largemouth bass can be caught on top-water lures at dusk, and on rubber worms. Anglers are catching crappies using small baits along the dam.

**Little River (Decatur):** Crappies are being caught in the rocks and along jetties. Bluegills are on the spawning beds and along jetties and can be caught using small baits.

**Slip Bluff (Decatur):** Bluegill can be caught on the spawning beds at the east corner of the dam.

**West Lake Osceola (Clarke):** Bluegill and crappie fishing is good near shoreline. Largemouth bass fishing is good.

**Viking (Montgomery):** Crappie fishing is fair using tube jigs tipped with a minnow or minnow suspended from a bobber around brush piles, or suspended in 8 to 10-feet of water. Bluegill fishing is excellent along shoreline. Look for spawning beds (look like elephant tracks) in 1 to 3 feet of water. Try using small jigs and/or night crawlers. Catfish fishing has been good on liver.

**Cold Springs (Cass):** Catfish are being caught on liver and prepared baits. Bluegill fishing is good using small jigs or night crawlers near shore.

**Manawa (Pottawattamie):** Bluegill fishing is good along the shallows and lagoons on jigs and night crawlers. Anglers are catching good numbers of channel catfish in the evening using prepared baits or crawfish.

**Greenfield (Adair):** Fishing is good for 8-inch bluegills using jigs and/or night crawlers along shoreline. Anglers are also catching lots of small largemouth bass.

**Orient (Adair):** Fishing is fair for channel catfish using liver or prepared baits.

**Nodaway (Adair):** Bluegills are biting on jigs/night crawlers along the shore and around structure.

**Morman Trail (Adair):** Walleye fishing good on cloudy days or toward evening using chartreuse jigs.

**Prairie Rose (Shelby):** Fishing is good for 8-inch crappies on jigs/minnows around rocks and woody structure. Channel catfish are being caught on liver. Bluegills are being caught on small jigs or a small piece of night crawler on a small hook suspended with a bobber along or near the shoreline. Bass fishing has been good.

**Willow (Harrison):** Largemouth bass fishing is good using a variety of baits.

**Big Creek Lake (Polk):** Crappie fishing has been good using jigs and/or jig/minnows combinations. Walleye fishing has been excellent using lead-headed jigs and minnows, although most walleye caught are below the 15-inch legal size limit. Bluegill fishing is good, with the best areas around rocky areas and near woody structure. Channel catfish fishing has been good.

**Beaver Lake** (Dallas): Crappie fishing is good with the best areas around the woody structure along the shorelines. Largemouth bass fishing has also been good using a variety of lures. Some nice-sized bullheads are also in Beaver Lake; try night crawlers around the jetties.

**Don Williams** (Boone): Crappie fishing is good with the best fishing in the mornings and evenings. Channel catfish fishing is good using night crawlers at the north end of the lake. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair using top-water lures around shoreline structure.

**Lake Ahquabi** (Warren): Bluegill fishing has been fair using night crawlers or wax worms. Redear sunfish fishing has also been fair to good with the best success using wax worms fished close to the bottom around the vegetation. Crappies are being caught using crappie jigs and/or wax worms or worms. Largemouth bass – primarily sub-legal sized fish – are being caught on crankbaits. A few channel catfish have been reported caught.

**Hooper Lake** (Warren): Bluegill and redear have been caught using traditional baits and lures. Some largemouth bass are being caught on crankbaits, although as in Lake Ahquabi, most fish are sub-legal.

**Rock Creek** (Jasper): Crappie fishing has been fair for boat anglers in deeper water using jigs and minnows. Most fish are 9 to 10 inches. Channel catfish fishing has been good using night crawlers.

**Easter Lake** (Polk): Crappie fishing has been fair using jigs and minnows. Largemouth bass have been taken along the face of the dam using spinners and top-water lures. Channel catfish are being taken in the shallower areas using night crawlers and stink baits.

**Hickory Grove Lake** (Story): Crappie fishing is fair using jigs/minnows. Largemouth bass fishing has been good using top-water lures along the shorelines. Bluegill fishing has picked up using traditional small hooks and tipped with worms.

**Saylorville Lake** (Polk): Crappie fishing has been good with most anglers are using micro-jigs and wax worms, or bobbers and minnow combinations. White bass fishing using jigs has been good near the outlet to Big Creek and is picking up in other areas of the lake. Tailwater: White bass fishing has been excellent below Saylorville using leadheads and twister tails. A few flathead catfish have been caught.

**Lake Red Rock** (Marion): Crappie fishing has been good with the best areas in the marina and in the Teeter Creek area. White bass fishing has been good in the Whitebreast area. Tailwater: Crappie and white bass/wiper fishing has been good in the tailwater from Lake Red Rock using jigs and/or minnows. A few larger walleye have also been caught.

**For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

### **Southeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 16 – 19:** River levels have lowered and are expected to stabilize in pools 16 – 19 over the next week which should set up some good fishing. Catfishing is good along rock shorelines with leeches and dew worms; some fish are starting to hit stink bait. Crappie and bluegill fishing is fair to good in most backwater areas. Fishing for white bass is good to very good in the tailwaters of the lock and dams

or near the mouths of creeks. Anglers are beginning to catch walleyes on the wing dams.

**Lake Darling** (Washington): People are still catching crappies, but mostly smaller fish. Catfish are now biting on chicken liver and minnows.

**Lake Geode** (Henry): On the warm sunny days, the bluegills and redear sunfish are biting in the shallows, but on the cool rainy days they are moving back to deeper water. Not much spawning activity is going on right now.

**Lake Odessa** (Louisa): The lake is close to normal levels. The Toolesboro road remains closed and will be for some time. The Sand Run boat ramp is now usable. Bluegills are biting now and the water is fairly clear. Try small jigs tipped with worms for some good catches.

**Lake Rathbun** (Appanoose): Crappies have been hitting on small jigs and minnows. Some sorting is required for larger fish. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers and cut bait.

**Lake Sugema** (Van Buren): Crappies have been biting on minnows. Largemouth bass and walleye have been hitting on crankbaits.

**Lake Keomah** (Mahaska): Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs. Largemouth bass have been biting on artificial lures.

**Lake Miami** (Monroe): Bluegills and crappies have been hitting on small jigs fished around the standing timber and in the coves. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers.

**Coralville Reservoir** (Johnson): Catfishing has been good on various baits. The fish are in pre-spawn and are found close to the rock walls. Crappie fishing has been slow to fair; a few crappies are being caught around brush piles and rock walls throughout the reservoir.

**Lake Macbride** (Johnson): Crappie fishing has been good to fair with anglers still catching crappies around brush and near the causeway area on jigs and minnows.

**Pleasant Creek** (Linn): White bass and largemouth bass fishing has been good to fair on artificial baits and leeches. Bluegills are being caught off the beds in shallow areas of the lake on worms and jigs. Walleye fishing has been fair on jigs tipped with leeches.

**Central Lake** (Jones): Bluegill fishing has been fair on jigs and slip bobber rigs tipped with worms. Bass fishing has been fair.

**Diamond Lake** (Poweshiek): Catfish have been hitting on paste baits and liver. Bluegill fishing has been fair on jigs and worms.

**Wapsipinicon River** (Jones): Smallmouth bass fishing has been fair on artificial baits. Catfishing has been good on stink bait throughout the river.

**Iowa River** (Johnson): Catfishing has been good to fair below the Coralville Reservoir and throughout the river.

**Iowa River** (Louisa): The river is back down to near normal levels for this time of year. Catfishing is fair on minnows and night crawlers.

**Skunk River** (Washington and Henry): Water levels are back to normal but the temperature is still on the cool side for the best catfishing. Catfishing is fair on night crawlers and minnows. Carp are biting on dough balls and night crawlers below the Oakland Mills Dam.

**Cedar River** (Benton, Linn and Cedar): Catfishing has been fair below the Five and One dam and throughout the river on various baits.

**For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.**

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